

PLAIN TALKS

JANUARY
1980



MAIL BOX

THE COVER

Carl Rabalais got an early start one brisk morning in November — a move that paid off with the vivid cover photograph of transmission towers at Sabine Station near Bridge City, Texas.

The sunrise picture was shot with Kodachrome 25 film which, reports Rabalais, "... was outdated." The 25-year-old Gulf States employee adds, "I bought it half-price at Wilson's." Ironically, Rabalais will receive \$50 for having his photo accepted by a company publication.

A native of Nederland, Rabalais says he has been interested in photography since high school. He purchased his first camera — a Ricoh SLR — in 1972. Just last August, he purchased the Nikon used for the cover shot.



Rabalais joined GSU in April, 1979, as a draftsman in Power Plant Engineering and Design. He holds an associate of applied sciences degree in drafting technology from Lamar University. Rabalais and his wife, Jackie, recently moved back to Nederland from Beaumont.

Each month, the newly redesigned Plain Talks will feature a cover photograph shot by an employee.

Communications manager explains format changes

Plain Talks has undergone many size and style changes since it began publishing in 1922 under the name **Just Plain Talks**. From the small **Reader's Digest** appearance of the '20s and '30s, **Plain Talks** developed into a **Life and Look** size during the war years. Various other sizes were tried, including a newspaper and, most recently, a magapaper (the cross between a newspaper and a magazine).

By now you've already noticed that the size has changed again — back to "a regular magazine size." It is not change just for the sake of change. The new look for **Plain Talks** was undertaken at the request of a large number of employees who viewed the large format as "cumbersome" or "hard to read."

We tried to retain the magapaper look throughout 1979 with some alterations, but with

plans to return to the size of this issue in 1980.

Our objective is to be responsive to the information needs of employees. Above all, it's your publication.

The new look also brings with it a new editor — Susan Huff. For the past year, Susan has been editor of **Newsbreaker** and several other GSU publications.

She plans for each issue to feature an employee-photographed cover, an expanded "Inside GSU" section, a photo feature and a human interest feature or employee profile.

During its 57 years of publication, **Plain Talks** has undergone almost as many changes as the company and the employees it serves. To continue with that tradition of flexibility, the **Plain Talks** staff will remain open to your comments and suggestions.

Henry Joyner

Gulf States Utilities Company
Zachary, Louisiana

Thank you for sending me a copy of "ways to cut costs" and your budget billing plan. I find them very informative and interesting and helpful! I'll share them.

Thanks, too, for the thought, effort and cost of this project. Budget Billing is a fine plan. (I do not envy your book-keepers!) I do like your new form of monthly statements (for several reasons).

Thanking you for the years of good service from your company and wishing you continued success, I am

Very sincerely,
Della Law
Cotton Valley, Louisiana

PLAIN TALKS

Volume 59 — Number 1 —
January, 1980

Published monthly for employees and annuitants of Gulf States Utilities Company. Produced within the Public Affairs Department, Fred C. Repper, vice president, by the Communications Department, Henry Joyner, manager. Address all communications to Editor, **PLAIN TALKS**, Gulf States Utilities Company, P.O. Box 2951, Beaumont, Texas 77704, Phone (713) 838-4366.

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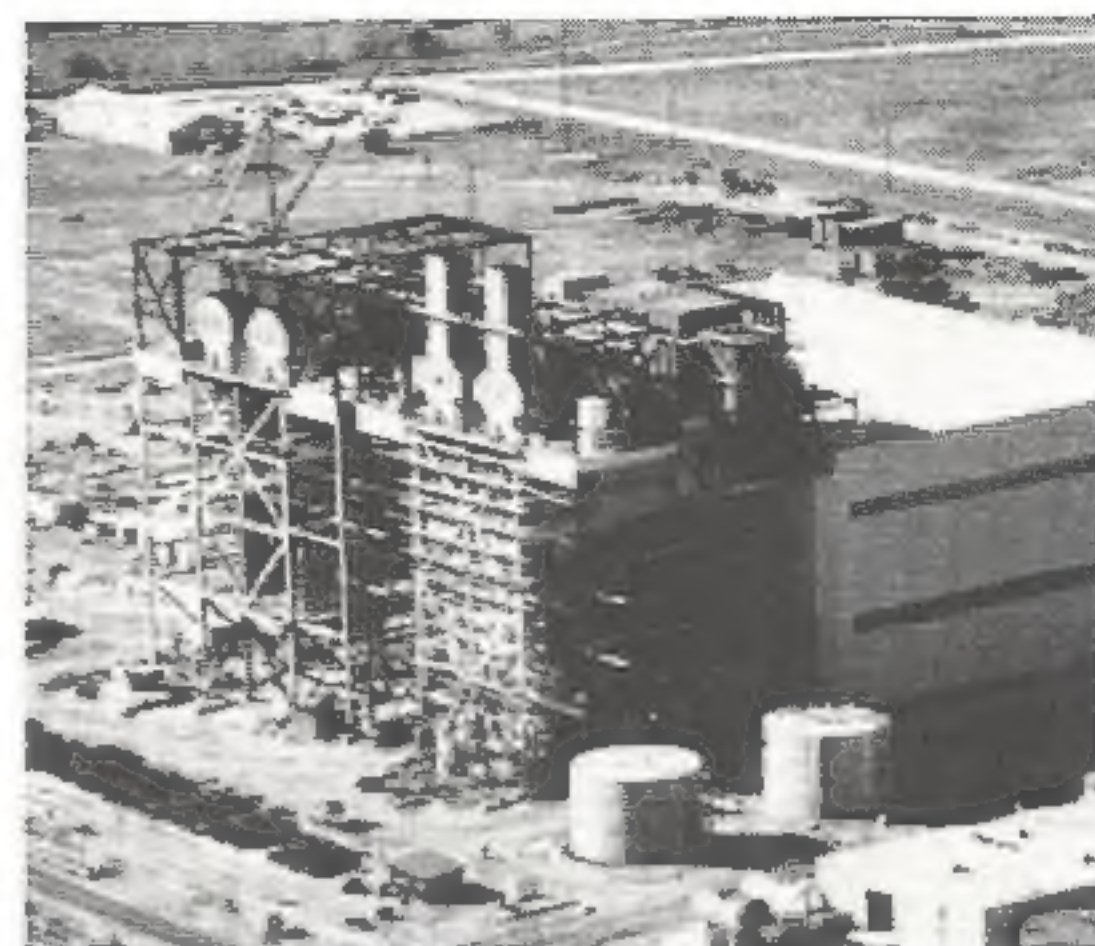
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City staffers learn about energy audits

GSU conducted a two-day training program December 18-19 for the City of Beaumont's home rehabilitation staff on residential energy conservation, home insulation and weatherization.

The training was the result of the recent appropriation of \$190,000 to the home rehabilitation budget to finance energy-conserving home repairs to homes in four city census tracts already targeted for a block grant-financed home rehabilitation loan program.

Rehabilitation specialists watched a GSU energy audit first-hand on the first day of the training program as Gene Koci, GSU supervisor of energy audits, inspected a home in the city's Charlton-Pollard neighborhood, one of the areas eligible for aid under the program.

"This training will enable the home rehab staff to perform their own energy audits — telling energy conservation loan and grant applicants where they are losing energy in their homes, recommending repairs and estimating how much they can save on their utility bills by making these repairs," said Pam Whitford, city rehabilitation loan officer.

Applicants must be residents of the block grant neighborhoods to qualify for the energy conservation loans. The Community Development Block Grant Program, sponsored by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), provides funds for improvements in designated areas of the city, ranging from street lighting and drainage to residential renovations.

Andrews, Willis changes given

Controller Francis J. Andrews was named GSU's principal accounting officer, effective Dec. 1, 1979. The additional position for Andrews led to the appointment of Bobby Joe Willis as assistant controller, also effective on that date.

Andrews was elected controller in February, 1979, when he came to GSU from a position as assistant controller for Northeast Utilities in Connecticut. The



Francis Andrews

36-year-old Baltimore, Md. native is a Certified Public Accountant and holds a bachelor's degree in accounting from Johns Hopkins University and an MBA degree in finance from Loyola College in Baltimore.

Willis, 43, is a native of New Orleans. He has been with Gulf States since 1962 when he was employed as a junior accountant. Before his latest promotion, Willis served as manager-accounting services. He holds a bachelor's degree in personnel management from Louisiana State University. Willis also has completed the Public Utility Executive Program through the University of Michigan.



Pt. Arthur Division gives car to school

A Gulf States' car was recently donated to the Stilwell Technical Center, a vocational training school for high school students in the Port Arthur Independent School District, by the company's Port Arthur Division.

Division Vice President Ted Meinscher presented the keys to the vehicle to Dr. Bernard P. Fleener, deputy superintendent for maintenance operations and equipment for the school district. The vehicle, which was damaged in a wreck, will be used by auto mechanic classes.

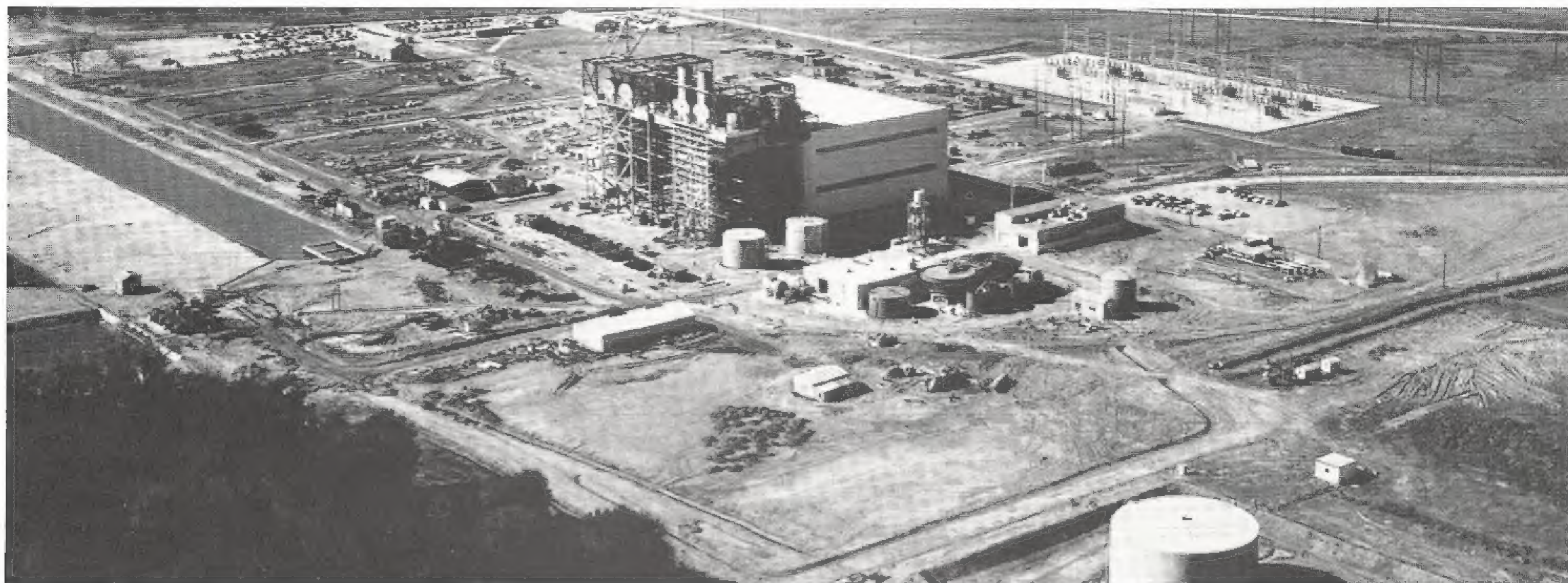


Beaumont Division purchases streetlight truck

A new streetlight repair truck is expected to be a big help to the Beaumont Division, where streetlights are often out of operation because of vandalism.

In late December, the truck was already on the job in the Orange district. Shown in the bucket is Bud Miller, lineman-second class, while driver Fred Augustine, serviceman-first class, offers assistance.

SABINE No.5: GSU's LAST OIL/GAS GENERATING UNIT GOES ON LINE



Sabine Station, 1962.

Gulf States' newest electric generating unit, Sabine No. 5, went into commercial operation at 1 p.m. Friday, December 21.

The 480,000-kilowatt unit, which will help the company better meet the region's growing demand for electricity, is the last oil- or gas-fired unit planned by GSU.

Speedy completion of Sabine #5 was necessary in order to assure that natural gas for the unit would be available at an attractive price under an existing gas supply contract. If it had been necessary to obtain new gas or oil supplies for the unit, it is believed that the additional cost would have been quite expensive.

Principal contractor for the \$142 million project, which took nearly five years to complete, was Mid-Valley Inc. of Houston.

Although federal legislation enacted in 1978 forbids the use of oil or natural gas in new electric power plants, during 1979,



Mid-Valley employees install turbine.



Arthur Wolf, operator for Sabine 5.

the Department of Energy classified Sabine 5 as an existing unit, and an exemption has been applied for to allow the use of gas. Had the DOE not acted, GSU would have been forced to undertake the extremely expensive task of converting the almost-completed unit to coal.

Completion of Sabine 5 brings Gulf States' total capacity to 5.9 million kilowatts generated by 33 units, all of them oil- or gas-fired, at six locations — Lewis Creek, Neches and Sabine stations in Texas and Nelson, Willow Glen and Louisiana stations in Louisiana.

Construction of earlier units at Sabine Station began in 1960, with Sabine No. 1 going on line January 31, 1962. The Bridge City power plant was named after an earlier Sabine Station in nearby Orange — a plant that had also featured an ice plant and the Orange water department.

HARD HATS AND LACE SUIT BRIDGE CITY WOMAN

by Susan Huff

A bit of stubbornness and a lot of ambition figured in Bonnie Duval's decision nearly six years ago to become an operator at GSU's Sabine Station power plant.

When the Bridge City woman reported for her first day of duty on March 11, 1974, she was the company's first female operator. As of mid-December, the company has 11 women in operator or operator's helper positions at four power plants — Neches, Sabine, Louisiana and Willow Glen stations.

The petite 32-year-old mother of three girls had previously worked outside the home only as a cashier in a drugstore. When she announced plans to seek employment at the power plant, her husband, Ronnie, laughingly predicted, "You'll never pass the test!"

Mrs. Duval has been a part of the GSU family most of her life — part of the reason she wanted to work for the company. But, even though her father, Walter H. Burris, had retired as a control room foreman at Sabine, he initially suggested that perhaps her place was in the home.

Admitting, "I've always been stubborn and will do any dadgum thing I want to," Mrs. Duval recalls that she ignored any less-than-enthusiastic responses to her plans.

There had been an earlier obstacle to overcome. After quitting high school in the 10th grade, she earned her equivalency diploma 10 years later in February, 1974.



Bonnie Duval

Since having been hired onto the job, Mrs. Duval notes that both her husband and father have been supportive.

Although she confirms that women probably need to be especially on their toes when tackling any traditionally-male job, she also believes that "... all in all, it's easier to work with men."

During the first few weeks, she recalls, "There were a few (male co-workers) that would never let it pass ... They had a going bet on how long I'd last as an operator. The guy with the longest bet thought I'd last only six months."

What does Mrs. Duval most enjoy about her job?

She explains, "Out here, what you do, you are responsible for. You're not responsible for everybody else's mistakes, which is what sometimes happens when you're a cashier and people start griping about high prices and so on."

A shift worker, Mrs. Duval says her only regret is that when she is on the evening shift, she sometimes goes from Tuesday to

Friday without seeing her children.

The job has affected her home life in somewhat unexpected ways, too.

"Unfortunately, at home, I get to do things I wouldn't have done before," she remarks. She remembers having repaired the family's water pump one night after getting off the 3-11 shift. "My husband was already in his pajamas and he didn't want to get out. Besides, it just needed priming."

After all, knowing how machinery works is an important part of her job as an operator.

Mrs. Duval advises women considering accepting similar jobs to "be yourself, because the men can see right through you. You can't spend your time combing your hair or putting on makeup."

Although her 15-year-old daughter, Tammy, is already married, and Terri, 14, also has plans to become a homemaker, 10-year-old Lucinda has announced that she plans to be "just like her Mama."

Mrs. Duval says she encourages all of her daughters to "get a good education" as an important step toward attaining their goals.

The curly-haired woman who usually wears blue jeans and boots on the job now finds herself wearing "lace and soft dresses off the job a lot more than before."

Her hobby, she notes, is collecting dolls, particularly antique, porcelain and television series specimens. Her collection now contains more than 250 dolls.

Mrs. Duval expresses satisfaction with her lifestyle, saying it aptly reflects her philosophy that "you can be anything you want to be."



Jack Kennedy says PEP agreement will speed work.



Crawford, dignitaries break ground.

When GSU Board Chairman Don Crawford presided over groundbreaking ceremonies December 13 for the company's new headquarters — Edison Plaza — he mentioned that the site in downtown Beaumont had once been graced by "the best little boarding house in Texas."

His joking reference to the bawdy houses that appeared in downtown Beaumont during the oil boomtown days provided a note of frivolity for what some GSUers referred to as the "mud-breaking."

Despite the chilly, rainy weather, many area dignitaries and news media representatives attended the ceremony.

Crawford told the gathering that the company's new 17-story office tower will be a showcase of energy efficiency. The present building — the old Edson Hotel in downtown Beaumont — has



Beaumont Mayor Maury Meyers, Crawford view model.



150,000 square feet, compared to 462,000 in the new office.

Because the latest energy-saving techniques and equipment will be included in the new building, it is estimated that annual energy consumption will amount to less than 60,000 BTU's per square foot. The comparable figure in the existing building is 217,757 BTU's.

On a square-foot basis, the study projects that the new building will use about one-fourth as much energy as the existing structure and will save the energy equivalent of 29,000 barrels of oil a year.

Crawford commented, "This will be the first time GSU will have occupied headquarters designed and constructed to fit the needs of an electric utility."

Occupancy is expected to take place in mid-1981.

Beaumont teens take clowning seriously



Photo by Pete Churton

Jo Anna Blair, far right

Clowning around is serious business for about 25 teenagers in Beaumont, including the daughters of two Gulf States' employees.

Laura Glaze, the daughter of Lou Ann Glaze in general services — Beaumont, and Jo Anna Blair, the daughter of Richard Blair, computer department — Beaumont, belong to a Trinity United Methodist Church group that uses clowning as a vehicle for spreading the gospel.

According to Mrs. Glaze, who serves as a counselor for the group, the Beaumont church's clown ministry focuses on "bringing the message of the church to groups of persons outside its walls in a novel and entertaining way."

Clowning appears to be a popular ministry for Methodists in Texas, Mrs. Glaze reported. The Beaumont group, which is made up of young people from 13 to 18 years old, was organized after a similar group from Dallas' Highland Park United Methodist Church made a presentation at Trinity.

Since the group banded together in August, 1978, the teens have performed in local hospitals and nursing homes. They have also participated in Dallas workshops, conducted workshops in nearby Liberty

and Dayton and provided programs for vacation church school sessions throughout southeast Texas.

The clown ministry is a self-supporting group that raises funds for supplies through bake sales and other special projects, Mrs. Glaze explained.

Employee named coach of the year

Two Sabine Station employees — Rodney Townsend and Keith Sanders — were recently cited for their work as coaches for the Bridge City Recreation Association. Townsend, an equipment operator, was recognized as coach of the year for his work with the Pee Wee Cowboys. Sanders, a control room foreman, received a trophy for his work with the team. Townsend credited Sanders for enabling him to win the coach of the year award, explaining that Sanders frequently filled in for him when his shift work schedule prevented him from being with the team.



Payment Processing employees host birthday party

Betty G. Fontana, section head of Payment Processing, was honored on her 50th birthday with a party hosted by co-workers. A 26-year employee of GSU, she received a corsage, birthday cake and gift certificate.

Employee becomes grandfather



When Danna Sue Delk made her appearance in late 1979, she became the first grandchild of James C. West Jr., district serviceman in Groveton. The infant is the daughter of Dennis and Lynda Delk of Beaumont.

Four employees set to retire

Three GSU employees are expected to retire February 1, and a fourth employee is expected to retire March 1. Those planning February retirements are James W. Atkins, Human Resources, Beaumont; Melba N. Magee, Information and Data Services, Beaumont; and George W. Parton, Electric T&D, Lafayette. Mary R. Kessler, System Engineering, Beaumont, plans to retire March 1.

One GSUer, four retirees die

Beaumont employee Paul Harrington, a coordinator in Transmission Construction, died December 17, 1979.

Retirees who died in December included Jessie L. Davis of Baton Rouge, December 5; Albert Tate of Baton Rouge, December 7; Lester R. Jackson of Silsbee, December 18; and John Joseph Morrison of Beaumont, December 26.

Baton Rouge twins excel at tennis

When Dana De and De Ann Watlington take their places on a tennis court, they pose more than the usual "doubles' trouble" for their opponents.

The 14-year-old Baton Rouge girls happen to be identical twins — a fact that reportedly has caused many an identity problem for opponents and sports reporters viewing the top-ranked duo in action.

Daughters of GSU's John Watlington, an electrical maintenance foreman at Willow Glen Station, the girls began playing tennis when they were 10. They played in their first tournament a year later.

In Louisiana, the twins are the No. 1 ranked Women's Open Doubles Division Team, a ranking for females of all ages. De Ann is No. 1 in the Women's Open Single Division, while Dana De is No. 8 in that division.

They are also currently the No. 1 Double Team in the South, covering a 10-state area.



DeAnn and Dana De

According to their father, the girls hope to become career tennis players after college. They have already defeated college players, Watlington boasts.

Their involvement in the sport has already begun to pay. De Ann just won an all-expense paid trip to California to represent Louisiana in the Seventeen Magazine National Tennis Tournament of Champions.

by Lydia Mitchell

Co-workers observe birthday with funeral spray



When Gary Nicholas, Beaumont purchasing agent in Materials Management, turned 40 in early November, his co-workers observed the event by sending him a wreath of black flowers. Nicholas is shown accepting the spray from Frank Groves.

Two men receive lifesaving award

Death from electrical shock, choking on food or by drowning are examples of tragedies that can sometimes be averted by bystanders who can apply the proper basic first aid techniques.

Almost 40 GSU employees have done just that during the past 15 years.

They are among the recipients of the President's Lifesaving Award — a recognition program for lifesaving actions by employees. To be cited, a candidate must document his actions.

Two more names were added to the roster at the beginning of 1980 — those of Mack Hamilton, meterman first class of Orange, and Lannis Tynes, supervisor-engineering design, Louisiana, of Beaumont.

In separate incidents during November, 1979, both men saved a choking victim's life by applying the Heimlich maneuver to dislodge the food. Tynes saved a co-worker's life.

Recipients of the award and the year in which they performed lifesaving acts are given below:

— In 1964, Linda Gilpin, Willie B. Wells, Roy McGee, J. R. Williams and Ray Thompson.

— In 1967, Homer C. Shawver and Paul Lamar Jr.

— In 1969, Shelton J. Trahan and Charles I. Saunders.

— In 1970, Lawrence Sam.

— In 1971, Wally Sisk and Larry Smith.

— In 1972, Earl Garvin, Randolph A. Anding and Nolan P. Daigle.

— In 1974, M. T. Alford and Bobby Havard.

— In 1976, Frank D. Rozas and A. D. Smith.

— In 1977, Bobby J. Parham, Nathaniel Stephens, Marty R. Martin, Walter Feeman, Ellis Varnado, Bobby Sheets, Joe Garrett, Butch Turnley and Carol Wilson.

— In 1978, Tom Ashley, Shirley Kennedy, G. W. Henderson, Jimmy Hurst, Mike Wheat and Marvin James.

— In 1979, Melvin Adams.



Co-workers observe promotion with farewell party

Kenneth Knowles, Beaumont Division substation operator, was honored by co-workers with a farewell party November 30 that marked his transfer to a system operator position in the Main Office. Knowles' promotion was effective December 1.



Orange



Orange



Sabine Station



CHRISTMAS ALBUM



Sabine Sta



Orange



Orange



Beaumont



Nelson Station



Madisonville



Lake Charles



ion



Beaumont



New Caney



Beaumont



Jennings



New Caney



Lake Charles



Beaumont



Jennings



Jennings



Jennings

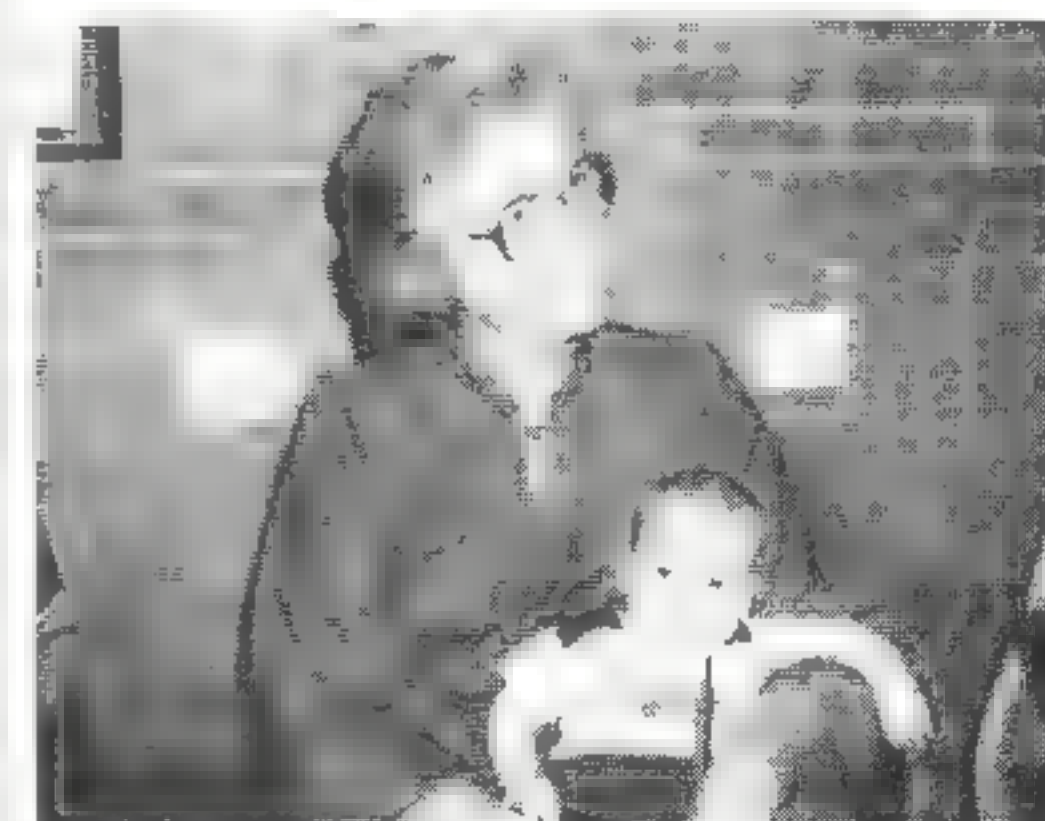
A
CHRISTMAS
ALBUM



New Caney



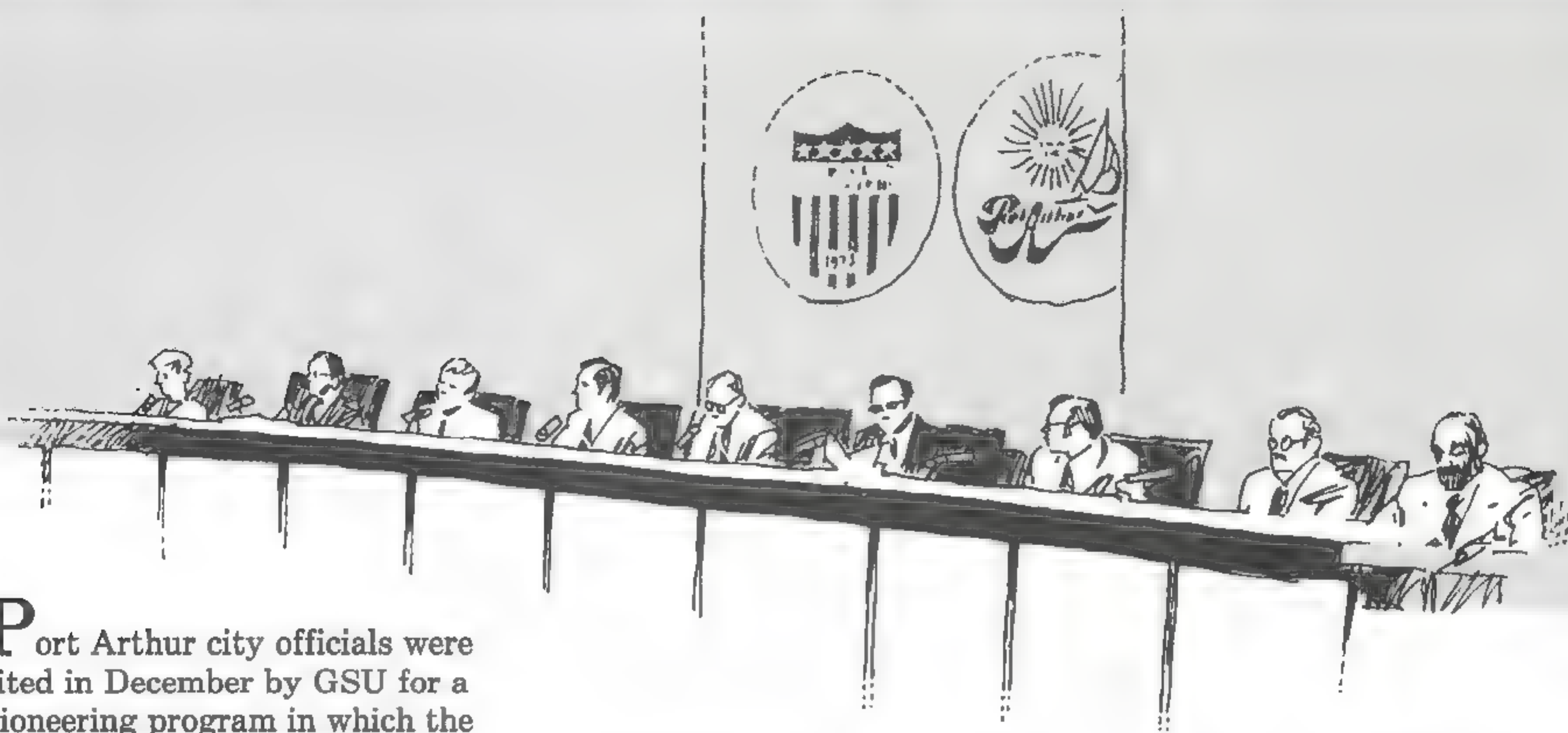
Beaumont



Jennings

PORT ARTHUR PIONEERS ENERGY CONSERVATION BUILDING CODE

by Rick Harvin



Port Arthur city officials were cited in December by GSU for a pioneering program in which the city revised its code to help "... provide substantial savings of financial and energy resources to the citizen, Gulf States Utilities Company and the nation."

Company officials representing the Texas Energy Information Center Advisory Board presented a plaque and the citation to city officials at City Hall December 3 in recognition of city code changes which encourage energy-saving site orientation in residential housing and apartment developments.

The proclamation, in part, read, "Be it hereby resolved that Gulf States Utilities Company Energy Information Center Advisory Board publicly recognizes and supports the City of Port Arthur for its leadership in seeking energy self-sufficiency as part of an important local and national goal."

Consumer services personnel note that a correctly placed structure, where the glass area is

located away from summer sun and walls are properly oriented, can save up to 17 percent of the total heat gain in a home. That lowers air conditioning use and costs and helps reduce the load for the electric utility as well.

Employees in the Port Arthur Division had recognized the need for aid in the site orientation area. They had also realized that home buyers and renters are normally unaware of orientation and have no role in site layout.

"We knew that developers and builders were the keys to taking advantage of energy savings in the orientation area," explained Tom Clark, consumer services supervisor — Port Arthur. "So we started looking for a way to incorporate site development into residential developments," he added.

That search led to Gary Rapp, assistant planning director with the City of Port Arthur and a member of GSU's Texas Energy Information Center Advisory Board, who developed a code to provide maximum potential benefits to the city, the developer and the eventual owner or occupant.

Ray Hays, a Port Arthur developer and also a member of

the advisory board, saw the importance of conserving through orientation, and he revised some developments to take advantage of it. Rapp's ideas and Hays' plans were used in supporting adoption of the revised code.

The ordinance covers several items, and features these points: placing residential structures with their longest dimension running parallel to a line nine degrees south of west (with a 15 degree north variance and 16 degree south variance); encouraging plots with east-west orientation, thus eliminating lots on north-south streets; and permitting changes in building setback lines to increase solar access.

Persons involved in the program have commented that orientation is a "no-cost" way to aid in reducing the cooling load on the structure and, eventually, reducing the peak load of the electric utility.

"This is a good way to conserve energy and help the consumer, the developer and the utility as well," Clark said.

CENTENNIAL OF LIGHT: YEAR ENDS WITH SCHOLASTIC EVENT



GSU's Dr. Linn Draper (third from left) chats with LSU scholars.



Don Crawford addresses the gathering.

A chemist who concocted mixtures that changed colors and a nuclear energy expert who fielded questions both managed to capture the attention of a large audience in Baton Rouge in early December.

The two men — Princeton University chemistry professor Dr. Hubert Alyea and GSU's Dr. Linn Draper — were among several scholars and scientists who conducted sessions dealing with a wide scope of topics during a "Centennial of Light" science conference sponsored by GSU.

More than 360 elementary and high school science teachers from throughout Louisiana gathered in Louisiana State



Jane Dufrene, Lake Charles, assists science teacher.

University's Union Building for the comprehensive two-day event on December 6-7. Board Chairman Don Crawford explained in opening remarks that the conference commemorated the 100th anniversary of the invention of the first practical, incandescent light bulb by Thomas Alva Edison.

GSU's sponsorship of the Thomas Alva Edison Foundation's 19th science education

conference was in partnership with the Foundation, the Louisiana Department of Education and LSU. Other hosts included McNeese State University, Southern University and the University of Southwestern Louisiana.

Participating teachers were selected by the Department of Education from parish, city and parochial school systems throughout the state, as well as from LSU's laboratory school.

Many of the arrangements for the conference were made by Mildred Tribble, GSU's director-consumer and institutional programs, with assistance from a number of other Consumer Services Department personnel.

THE TRUTH SQUAD: NUCLEAR EXPERTS COUNTER FONDA-HAYDEN CHARGES

There was more than a little Hollywood drama involved in the late September "campaign for economic democracy" launched by actress Jane Fonda and her husband, activist Tom Hayden.

Their tour was planned as a five-week, 50-city blitz designed to bring their anti-business, anti-nuclear message to the press and the public.

Then the Edison Electric Institute formed an "Energy Truth Squad" to ensure a "balanced presentation of nuclear energy to the public, to make the clear distinction between fiction and fact," according to Jack Young, EEI's senior vice president.

GSU's Dr. Linn Draper joined another nuclear expert, Sandra Keifer, in following Fonda and Hayden, refuting their charges about nuclear energy and challenging them to debate the topic.

The Keifer-Draper team exactly followed the Fonda-Hayden itinerary, with the two holding press conferences and interviews and appearing on television and radio talk shows. Afterwards, Draper commented that the press was fair in providing equal time and space for their side of the issue.

Draper explained, "We wanted to be there in the spotlight with information that would allow the public to hear and consider both sides of the nuclear issue."

Fonda and Hayden advocated a total ban on nuclear energy, even though nuclear power currently provides about 13 percent of the nation's energy, according to EEI's Young.



Draper, who serves as technical assistant to Board Chairman Don Crawford, has been with the company since early 1979. Before joining GSU, he was an associate professor in the College of Engineering at the University of Texas at Austin and was director of the nuclear engineering program for eight years.

Keifer is a self-employed energy consultant who specializes in nuclear power issues. She spent 11 years as a nuclear engineer with Westinghouse Electric Corp., most of that time working on safety analyses of nuclear power plants.

Draper described the five-week stint as "an interesting, enlightening experience, but not something I'd want to do more than once."

Keifer said, "It was fascinating listening to Fonda and Hayden. Their arguments were so filled with emotion and rhetoric. They presented very

little factual information." As an example, Keifer told the Bechtel News, a Bechtel company publication, "... Fonda implied there will be an epidemic of cancer around Three Mile Island because of radiation. She's telling the public that small amounts of radiation will have very large adverse health effects. Yet there is no medical evidence to suggest that small amounts of radiation are harmful."

The Fonda-Hayden contention that there is a "lack of need" for nuclear power was mentioned by Draper as one of the most damaging of the anti-nuclear fallacies.

"Fonda and Hayden are saying the U.S. can shut down nuclear power and suffer no consequences. That argument is absurd, preposterous," Draper maintained.

Draper said the couple's refusal to debate the truth squad indicated they were "less confident on the facts than they'd like the public to believe."

The tour provided Draper and Keifer with some interesting clues about public perception of nuclear power. According to Draper, the EEI-sponsored pair found themselves "discussing the same issues that have been discussed for five years. We heard the same questions and concerns — safety, waste, the NRC. I don't think new issues were raised."

The truth squad blamed some of the problem on the nuclear industry having done an inadequate job of educating the public. Recently, however, "Industry efforts at communicating have certainly improved," Draper noted.

SERVICE AWARDS

**30
YEARS**



Jay Roy Peckham Jr.
Electric T&D
Beaumont



George S. Jolissaint
Plant Production
Baton Rouge



Louis P. Allen
Electric T&D
Port Arthur



Joseph B. LeBlanc
Division Accounting
Gonzales



Homer C. Shawver
Electric T&D
Silsbee



James H. Rhone
Electric T&D
Beaumont



Wallace J. Bertrand
Electric T&D
Jennings



Amos Stafford
Division Accounting
Conroe



Charles A. Seibert Jr.
Gas Department
Baton Rouge



Floyd A. Crow
Systems Operations
Beaumont



Mitchell S. Bridges
Accounting Services
Beaumont



Eulice J. Badeaux
Division Accounting
Port Arthur



Clovis J. Dumesnil Jr.
Electric T&D
Beaumont



Paul L. Grimes
Real Estate
Beaumont

**10
YEARS**

Q&A: LARRY HUMPHREYS ON RIVER BEND NUCLEAR GROUP

Editor's Note: Almost as a company within a company, the River Bend Nuclear Group has been established by the GSU board of directors. River Bend will be a 940 megawatt, General Electric Boiling Water Reactor (BWR). It is now under construction near St. Francisville, La. Charged with building, licensing and operating the company's first nuclear power plant, the River Bend Nuclear Group is headed by Executive Vice President Larry L. Humphreys. The following is a recent interview with Humphreys, who looks at the purpose and background of the group.

PT: Getting right to the nitty-gritty, what's the purpose of the River Bend Nuclear Group?

H: First — and most importantly — the board of directors wants the absolutely best possible management in the construction and operation of River Bend to assure the total safety of the plant. One method of getting that is to allow the River Bend management to focus completely on River Bend without distraction. With that in mind, this group was established to manage the River Bend project and do nothing else.

PT: Is it possible that creation of the group was in response to the Three Mile Island incident?

H: That has to be a yes and no answer. Some of the lessons learned from Three Mile Island are management lessons. Part of the reason for forming the group is to give its management the necessary tools, with no impediments, for absolute dedication to safety. I can't say what would have happened had there



been no Three Mile Island accident, but I suspect the board would have created the River Bend Nuclear Group, anyhow, because of other circumstances involved.

Primarily, this is the first project we have undertaken with partners. Joint participation requires very careful accounting of costs for construction, training and operation. We must leave a clear audit trail so costs can be properly allocated.

PT: Even with this management group focusing on River Bend, can you have it in operation by 1984?

H: Given the historical tendency in the industry to not being able to complete nuclear power plants on schedule, one would be inclined to say no. But we have the Nuclear Construction Stabilization Agreement in effect that provides four 10-hour work days for each of two construction groups. That means we are getting 70 hours of construction per week instead of the usual 40. Every report I have gotten is that the employees enjoy the longer shifts with four days off. It certainly looks as if it's working. If you look at the critical path of construction, we are holding

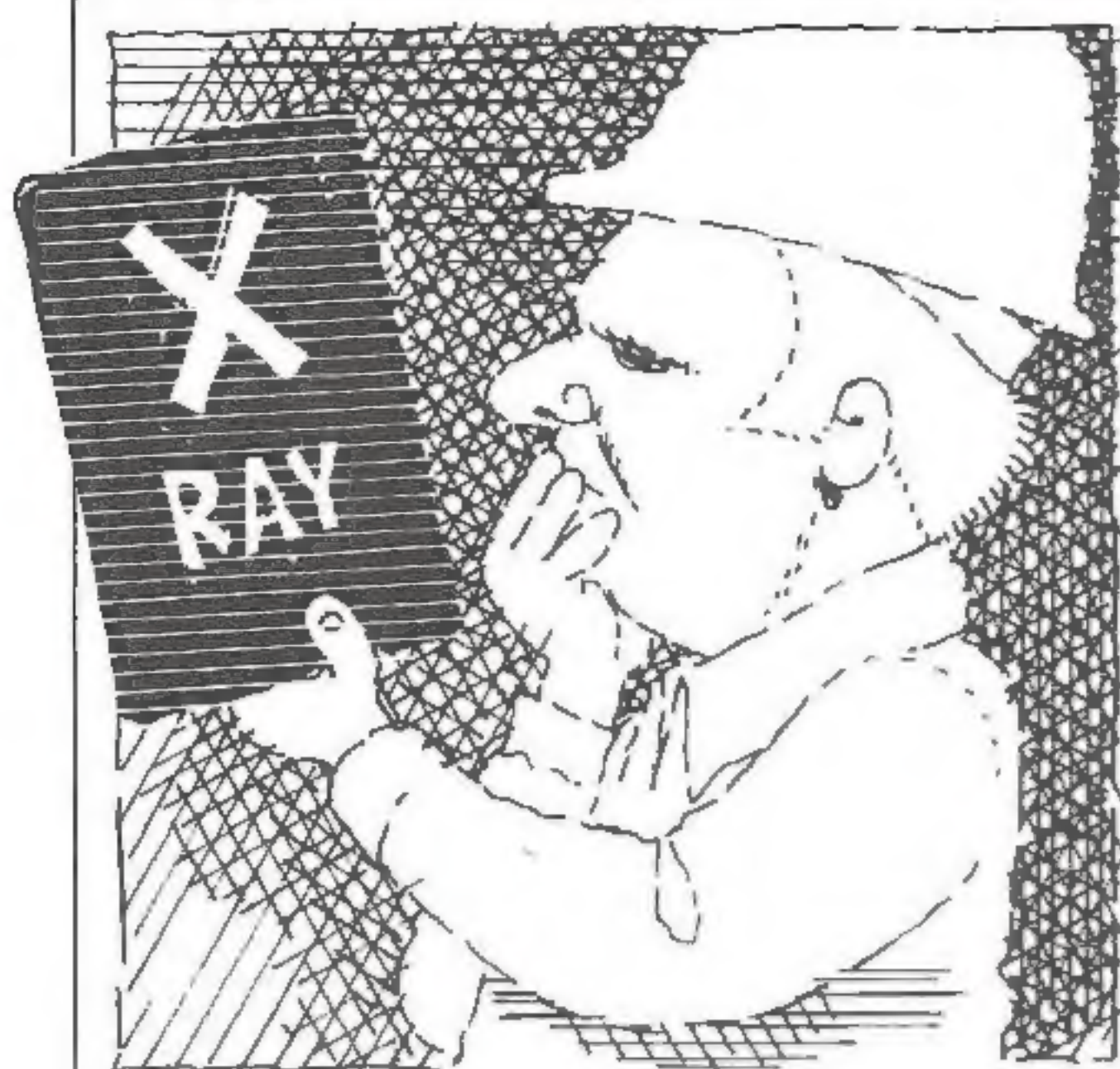
right with it. With that in mind, I am optimistic that we will make it if we are not sidetracked by regulatory intervention.

PT: Is the River Bend unit similar to Three Mile Island, and has your group benefited from the lessons learned there?

H: The answer to the first part is no, and the answer to the second part is yes. The similarity between the units goes no farther than that both use uranium as fuel and water as a moderator and coolant. The system that caused the problem at Three Mile Island does not even exist on our unit.

However, we did learn a great deal about operator training and reaction from TMI. First, you need to understand that when a nuclear unit is operating correctly, it is a very boring place to be. For days on end — even weeks — the operators do virtually nothing but check gauges. Even an airline pilot gets a chance to take off and land. With that in mind, we have begun to realize that operators must get more experience with off-standard operations. Just like airline pilots, they must be exposed to every possible malfunction we can devise — and they will. Simulators will be used to train and retrain them. These simulators will be so much like our controls that an untrained eye will not be able to tell whether it is looking at the simulator or the actual control room.

I am convinced that the operators will be so well trained that they will be able to correctly react to real situations that we never even thought of simulating.



Over a million Americans face radiation at work.

A recent Wall Street Journal article pointed out that over 1.1 million Americans are potentially exposed to radiation on their jobs. Workers are exposed to radiation in clinics, hospitals, laboratories, dentists' offices, shipyards, steel mills, breweries and even in one company that uses radiation to measure the density of wood chips being pressurized into roof shingles.

The many uses of radiation in industry constitute the "quiet part of the nuclear industry — the part most people don't know about," says one nuclear regulatory commission official.

More nuclear plants face shutdown

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission plans to order the shutdown of nuclear plants in January that have not complied with NRC short-term requirements resulting from the Three Mile Island "lessons learned." Some utility companies have already made modifications, but about 8 percent of the companies are behind schedule. Utilities will have a grace period of 30 days after December 31 to implement changes. If non-

compliance is due to lack of equipment delivery, they will have 30 days after receipt to install it.

Firm predicts windmills to be commercially competitive

Stone and Webster Engineering Corp. and 13 utilities recently issued a study that shows windmills could be commercially competitive in the Southwest by 1985. According to the study, windmills offer quicker alter-



natives than solar-related technology. The popular photovoltaic methods of producing electricity using solar rays won't be commercially available in the Southwest until 1994 at the earliest, and only if a breakthrough in technology is achieved. The study encompassed eight Southwestern and Western states and was funded by the Department of Energy.



Low-level radiation waste sites re-open

Two low-level waste sites have recently re-opened, much to the satisfaction of numerous hospitals around the country. Gov. Dixy Lee Ray of Washington re-opened the Hanford site six weeks after she ordered it closed. In Nevada, the Beatty site opened its doors after the state Board of Health rejected Gov. Robert List's petition to permanently shut the facility.

Both sites store low-level radioactive waste generated in research and medical procedures.

Atlanta will be home of INPO

Atlanta was chosen as the location for the electric utilities' new Institute of Nuclear Power Operations. According to INPO Board Chairman William Lee, Atlanta was selected over other cities because it provides easy access to the majority of the nation's nuclear power plant sites. Lee, who is also president of Duke Power Co., will guide the institute — slated to begin operations in 1980 with a \$12 million budget — until a president can be named.

ENERGY POSES BIGGEST CHALLENGE OF '80s

The decade of the '70s was a volatile one for energy suppliers and consumers. It began peacefully, with the widespread assumption that oil and natural gas resources were limitless, and ended chaotically, with the nation scrambling for ways to reduce its dependence on high-priced petroleum and fanatical ayatollahs.

The list of alternative fuels which someday may replace oil and natural gas is long — solar, tidal, biomass, synthetic, liquified and gasified coal. But most of those forms of energy will not be available for use on a large scale for decades to come.

The truth is that during the decade of the '80s the only two practical alternatives to oil and natural gas are coal and nuclear.

With oil no longer flowing from Iran and with Libya making noises about turning off its spigot, the need to turn quickly to coal and nuclear becomes more urgent. The federal government is moving to increase the use of coal, but its attitude toward nuclear energy is perplexing, to say the least.

In early November, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission said it would cease nuclear power plant licensing until the spring of 1980 *at the earliest*. W. Donham Crawford, Gulf States Utilities board chairman and chief executive officer, wrote a letter to President Carter and

the NRC members pointing out that there are seven nuclear units awaiting operating licenses and that a typical reactor displaces 10 million barrels of oil a year.

"How can we pass up this opportunity to offset, at least partially, the lost Iranian oil?" Crawford asked.

President Carter posed the same question when he held a press conference on December 7 to respond to the Kemeny Commission investigation of the Three Mile Island accident.

"The recent events in Iran have shown us the clear, stark dangers that excessive dependence on imported oil holds for our nation," the President said. "We must make every effort to lead this country to energy security."

Mr. Carter said that "every domestic energy source, including nuclear power, is critical if we are to free our country from its overdependence on unstable sources of high-priced foreign oil. We do not have the luxury of abandoning nuclear power or imposing a lengthy moratorium on its further use."

The President also said that "every possible step" must be taken to increase the safety of nuclear power. As Crawford pointed out in his November 21 letter, those steps are being taken.

Since TMI, the electric utility industry has implemented a comprehensive program for even safer nuclear operations. Major

elements in this effort are establishment of the Nuclear Safety Analysis Center and the Institute for Nuclear Power Operations.

One of the most perplexing aspects of the NRC freeze is that some of the nuclear plants whose operations are being delayed are identical to existing units which the NRC apparently considers safe because it has not closed them down.

The President told the NRC to end its moratorium within six months. But, as Crawford pointed out in his letter, "a moratorium is not necessary in order to apply the lessons of Three Mile Island. That already is being done."

The sooner the NRC lifts its ban on licensing, the sooner we can get about the business of easing the Middle East stranglehold on the nation. A green light for safe, economical and dependable nuclear power would be a fitting way to begin the decade of the 1980s.

by Kim McMurray

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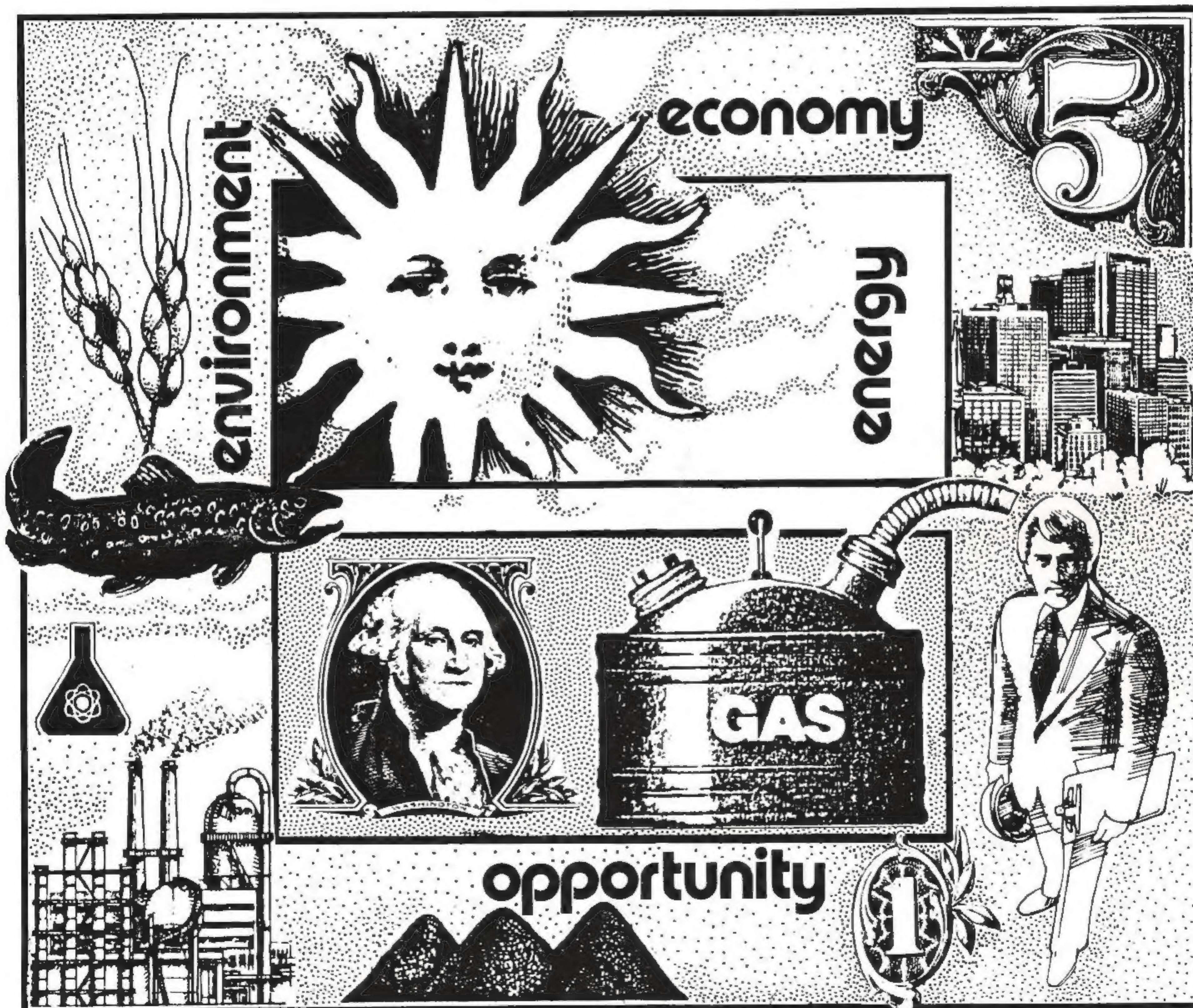
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